AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph on page 1, line 5 with the following amended paragraph.

The present application is related to U.S. Patent Application ~~No. 09/_____ (Attorney~~ No. 09/676,423 (Attorney Docket No. YOR9-2000-0464-US1) entitled "MACHINE CUT TASK IDENTIFICATION FOR EFFICIENT PARTITION AND DISTRIBUTION" to Rajan et al.; U.S. Patent Application ~~No. 09/_____ (Attorney~~ No. 09/676,425 (Attorney Docket No. YOR9-2000-0465-US1) entitled "NET ZEROING FOR EFFICIENT PARTITION AND DISTRIBUTION" to Roth et al.; and U.S. Patent Application ~~No. 09/_____ (Attorney~~ No. 09/676,424 (Attorney Docket No. YOR9-2000-0466-US1) entitled "DOMINANT EDGE IDENTIFICATION FOR EFFICIENT PARTITION AND DISTRIBUTION" to Wegman et al. all filed coincident herewith and assigned to the assignee of the present invention.

Please replace the paragraph on Page 14, line 1, with the following new paragraph.

Preferably, however, the linear complexity methods employed in step 1706 include U.S. Patent Application ~~No. 09/_____ (Attorney~~ No. 09/676,423 (Attorney Docket No. YOR9-2000-0464-US1) entitled "MACHINE CUT TASK IDENTIFICATION FOR EFFICIENT PARTITION AND DISTRIBUTION" (Machine Cut) to Rajan et al.; U.S. Patent Application ~~No. 09/_____ (Attorney~~ No. 09/676,425 (Attorney Docket No. YOR9-2000-0465-US1) entitled "NET ZEROING FOR EFFICIENT PARTITION AND DISTRIBUTION" (Zeroing) to Roth et al.; and U.S. Patent Application ~~No. 09/_____ (Attorney~~ No. 09/676,424 (Attorney Docket No. YOR9-2000-0466-US1) entitled "DOMINANT EDGE IDENTIFICATION FOR EFFICIENT PARTITION AND DISTRIBUTION" (Dominant Edge) to Wegman et al., filed coincident herewith, assigned to the assignee of the present invention and

incorporated herein by reference. Most preferably, in step 1708 the Dominant Edge method is used first, followed by Zeroing and then, by the Machine Cut method. This reduction may involve collapsing edges (Dominant Cut and Machine Cut) or reducing edge weights (Zeroing) and then collapsing edges. To reach a solution more quickly, on each pass through step 1706, only nodes and edges of a subgraph that were adjacent to areas reduced previously in step 1708 are rechecked.